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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9681
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RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS KHARTOUM 000035

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/SPG, S/CRS, AF SE WILLIAMSON
ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: SUDAN-CHAD TENSIONS FLARE

[¶1.](#) (SBU) Media and the UN reported that Chadian air force planes attacked Chadian rebel camps in Sudan near the villages of Goker and Wadi Radi 35 kilometers south of Geneina in West Darfur state on January 7. This follows Chadian President Deby's statement January

5 that Chad will pursue Chadian rebels inside Sudan. Deby accused GoS-supported rebels of attempting to destabilize Chad and creating an environment that would prevent the deployment of EU peacekeepers in Chad and UNAMID forces in Darfur.

[¶2.](#) (SBU) Sudanese army spokesman Othman al-Aghbash made a statement January 8 that Chadian aircraft had bombed positions in west Darfur killing and wounding civilians. According to press accounts, Al-Agbash charged that the Chadian attacks are backed by the West. Claiming that the volume of attacks exceeds Chad's capability, al-Agbash also charged that this indicated that western nations are conducting the attacks inside Sudan. Al-Agbash denied that Sudan is harboring Chadian opposition elements, and warned that Sudan has the capability to defend against any Chadian aggression and that any Sudanese action will be proportional to Chadian attacks.

[¶3.](#) (SBU) Sudan's State Minister of Foreign Affairs Al-Sammani Al-Wasila told the media January 8 that Chadian threats to break diplomatic relations with Sudan are "regrettable." Al-Sammani claimed that Sudan had not supported Chadian rebels and claimed that the Chadian government needs to reconcile differences with its internal Chadian rebel movement. Al-Sammani stressed that any Chadian armed opposition was inside Chad.

[¶4.](#) (SBU) Western Darfur Agricultural Minister Bashir Hamad told emboff January 8 that the GoS is supporting the Chadian rebels who are living inside Geneina. Hamad claimed the Chadian government is "fully aware of this." Hamad claimed that the precision of the Chadian nighttime aerial attacks, which he claimed had not resulted in any civilian casualties, was clear evidence that they have received western assistance.

[¶5.](#) (SBU) Comment: Reports of Chadian aircraft incursions into Sudan to attack Chadian rebels have mounted in the past few weeks. To this point the GoS has only responded with increased rhetoric. While Chadian and Sudanese forces have clashed before, such as in April 2007 when reportedly 17 Sudanese and eight Chadian soldiers were killed, there are no reports as yet of the Chadian army mounting a ground offensive into Sudanese territory. Of course, both countries have supported rebels fighting their neighbor for years (that is how Deby came to power) and continue to support them.

FERNANDEZ